

From: Gerald Bowman [GeraldBowman@compuserve.com]
Sent: Sunday, October 26, 2003 4:52 PM
To: Hague Regs
Subject: Concerns about the Hague Regulations for US citizens abroad

Dear Sir, Madam,

I am an American Licensed Clinical Social Worker living in Munich, Germany. I have been doing home studies and post placement visits for US citizens abroad since 1989. I am writing as I have some concerns about the effect the regulations will have on US citizens that reside abroad.

First, the regulations are written in such a manner that there is no differentiation between the types of US citizens that reside abroad. There are 3 groups:

- 1.) Those that are connected to the US military or US government. This group may have multiple assignments abroad, however, for the most part they are abroad on temporarily and return to the USA.
- 2.) US citizens that work for private organizations or NGO's. This group resides anywhere from 1-5 years abroad and generally return to the USA.

Expats that live in a country, work there, pay taxes, own property, etc. This group are US citizens that permanently reside abroad.

Second, the regulations as I understand them mandate the use of local resources, e.g. a US citizen residing in Germany must use the governmental resources in that country in order to process an adoption. This is concern to me because of 2 points:

1.) if the couple falls into group 1 or 2 above, how can the country provide post placement services? Since they can not guarantee post placement services they would be reluctant to assist couples.

2.) More worrisome is the fact that Germany along with many European countries have rules that discriminate and are primitive in their assessment of parents who wish to adopt. Some examples:

Single persons can not adopt.
Women over 35 can not adopt.

I am against any regulations that would adopt these standards. US citizens that reside

abroad regardless of their status should have the same rights and regulations as US citizens that reside in the USA. I would urge that the Hague regulations not be adopted until these issues can be resolved.

If I can assist or if you need additional information, please feel free to

contact me.

Best Regards,
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